Foreign investment in Nuclear Power Programme

1657. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has expressed its willingness to invite foreign investment in its Nuclear Power Programme;

(b) if so, whether certain countries have shown interest in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE):(a) to (c) The Government of India are open to specific offers for participation by private firms, Indian or foreign in the nuclear power sector. However, the Government have not received any concrete proposals so far to set up nuclear power plants in the country. Such offers, when received, would have to be considered under the prevalent rules and regulations.

Disposal of nuclear waste

1658. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present system of disposal of nuclear waste; and

(b) whether the method followed by in the country is as per the international standards and the norms followed by the developed countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Radioactive wastes in different physical forms *viz.*, solid, liquid and gaseous, are generated during operation and maintenance of nuclear reactors. The gaseous and liquid effluents are decontaminated by suitable treatment processes to ensure that the radioactive contents of the treated effluent are well within the permissible specified limits for discharge into the environment and the radioactivity is concentrated in small volumes. The concentrate from the liquid and solid wastes are immobilised in solid materials like cement, bitumen, polymers etc so that the radioactivity will not leach out and re-enter the bio-sphere. 'This conditioned' waste is packaged in suitable containers and placed in reinforced concrete trenches, tile

holes and vaults, located in access controlled areas, which are under constant surveillance.

(b) The method followed by India for disposal of nuclear waste is as per international standards and as followed by developed countries. The disposal operations are carried out under the surveillance of regulatory authorities.

Nuclear technology for health care

1659. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to develop nuclear technology for health care and food securities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when it would be implemented; and

(d) what would be the cost of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) is already involved in utilizing radiation technology for sterilisation of medical products and processing of food products. In total, there are three plants—one for sterilisation of medical products, other for hygenisation of spices and other products and the third one for sprout inhibition of onions.

(b) DAE is not setting up any new such plants. However, DAE is encouraging private entrepreneurs to set up such plants. A few MOUs have already been signed in this regard.

(c) and (d) Departmental plants are already completed. Three plants in private sector are in various stages of implementation and may come up in next 1-2 years of time. Cost of a typical industrial scale radiation processing plant is around Rs. 7 crore.

Threat posed by Uranium Radiation to the lives of Adivasis in Meghalaya

1660. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the infection of mysterious diseases caused by radiation in villages situated around uranium rich Domiasiyal